



## **EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS**

HONOLULU

### **NEWS RELEASE**

**LINDA LINGLE**  
GOVERNOR

For Immediate Release: October 8, 2004

### **GOVERNOR LINGLE LAUDS OUTSTANDING STATE EMPLOYEES; NAMES TOP STATE MANAGER, EMPLOYEE AND TEAM OF THE YEAR**

HONOLULU – Governor Linda Lingle today honored Sandra Yahiro, a departmental personnel officer with the State Department of Taxation as State Manager of the Year, and data processing systems analyst Liane Kimura with the Department of Labor & Industrial Relations as State Employee of the Year. The Governor also announced the “Membership File Integrity Section Team” from the Department of Human Services as State Team of the Year.

“On behalf of the people of Hawai`i, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate these outstanding state employees, managers and team members,” Governor Lingle said.

“These individuals have selflessly given of themselves to enrich the lives of our people. Oftentimes the work they do goes unnoticed, but our employees continue to provide the kind of services the public needs and deserve. I am impressed by the effort, ingenuity and aloha demonstrated by each and every one of our state employees. I’m proud of all our public employees, and I think the public should be as well,” the Governor added.

The three winners were selected from 48 exceptional group and individual nominees, which included 17 teams made up of 340 employees. Many teams were comprised of several divisions working together to find innovative approaches to delivering quality services.

A volunteer panel of five judges from non-state government organizations reviewed the 48 nomination packets and rated them according to defined categories. The judges then presented their recommendations for the three awards to Governor Lingle.

(more)

**Manager of the Year – Sandra “Sandi” Yahiro, Department of Taxation**

Sandi Yahiro was recognized for her exceptional achievements in building a more productive workforce.

In the one year since being hired as the departmental personnel officer of the Department of Taxation, Yahiro confronted challenges head-on. With determination, sound judgment and assistance from labor experts, she helped resolve some of the department's difficult labor relations cases requiring immediate attention. When the Taxpayer Services Branch was faced with having to fill a number of positions to staff its newly created one-stop service, Yahiro creatively found a way to quickly fill the approximately 90 vacancies.

“Sandi has been an invaluable resource to the department and its managers. She has provided them with guidance and encouragement as they worked with their employees toward improved performance. As a result of her exceptional leadership, department managers have given high praises for the outstanding customer service she and her staff provide,” Governor Lingle said.

**Employee of the Year – Liane Kimura, Department of Labor & Industrial Relations**

The committee recommended Liane Kimura, data processing systems analyst as the State Employee of the Year in recognition of her remarkable performance in spearheading creation and maintenance of the Disability Compensation Division's automation and computer system.

Kimura was instrumental in designing enhancements to the division's Lotus Notes infrastructure that has enabled the division to significantly improve its information and automation capabilities. This has resulted in real time access to Workers' Compensation claims information, and the capability to access current management statistical information essential to the division's continuing efforts to improve services to the public.

In addition, Kimura developed a plan to migrate from mainframe dependency into a less costly and more responsive client-server data warehouse environment that will save the state in excess of \$1 million annually.

“Liane's outstanding work has enabled the division to efficiently administer the Workers' Compensation, temporary disability and prepaid health care programs. Liane has indeed made a positive impact on the department's future and on the quality of services the public receives,” Governor Lingle said.

**State Team of the Year – Membership File Integrity Section (MFIS) Team, Department of Human Services**

The Med-Quest Division's Membership File Integrity Section Team was named State Team of the Year. This nine-member group exhibited a spirit of cooperation by helping their co-workers ensure timely processing of prior authorizations of medical services and items for the Medicaid fee-for-service program.

When the Medical Standards Branch of the Med-Quest Division assumed the additional responsibility of conducting prior authorizations for services and items of the Medicaid fee-for-service population without the benefit of additional positions, support services or training, this team stepped forward and volunteered to assist with this huge undertaking by inputting and researching data.

"This team exemplifies what teamwork is all about. As a result of their pure dedication, providers of Medicaid fee-for-service clients were able to receive timely assistance, and potentially devastating consequences to the Medicaid clients were avoided," Governor Lingle said.

**Governor's 2004 Selection Committee**

The volunteer members of the Governor's 2004 Selection Committee reviewed the nominations and pertinent information prior to judging. The committee is comprised of representatives from businesses or non-state government organizations. This year's members are: Gae Berquist-Trommald, executive vice president, Communications-Pacific; Dave Curtis, news director, KSSK; Edward Kubo, Jr., U.S. Attorney, U.S. Department of Justice; Tina Shelton, reporter, KHON TV-2; and Teena Rasmussen of Paradise Flower Farms.

The Governor's awards are designed to honor state executive branch employees, managers and work teams who exemplify the highest caliber of public service and dedication. The Department of Human Resources Development administers the statewide program. For more information contact Doreen Kuroda, Department of Human Resources Development, at (808) 587-1076.

####

For more information, contact:

Kathleen Watanabe  
Director, Dept. of Human Resource Devel.  
Phone: 587-1100

Lenny Klompus  
Senior Advisor – Communications  
Phone: 586-7705

Russell Pang  
Chief of Media Relations  
Phone: 586-0043